

OF THE MINISTRY OF POWER (SHRI YOGINDER K. ALAGH) : (a) The levels and storage of the major reservoirs in Kerala are given below :

Levels	As on 13.7.1997 (Meters)	As on 13.7.1996 (Meters)
Idukki	700.56	700.91
Sabirigiri	932.28	941.76
Storages	MU	MU
Idukki	203.42	217.07
Kakki	61.63	115.10

As can be seen from the above, the levels and storage in Idukki are more or less as in the last year, whereas the levels and storage in Kakki are slightly less this year compared to the last year.

(b) to (d) The allocation to Kerala from the 15% unallocated power of the Central generating stations in the Sothern Region was 30% with effect from 8.5.1997. The share was increased to 50% with effect from 12.6.97 and further to 65% with effect from 1.7.1997.

#### **E-Mail Services**

391. SHRI VIJAY PATEL : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government propose to make the E-mail services, more people oriented and effective;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor ?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI BENI PRASAD VARMA) : (a) Yes Sir, Licences have been awarded on non-exclusive basis for operation of E-Mail Service to sixteen service providers. The Licensees have to provide the service within the defined ceiling tariff and quality of service has to be met.

(b) The cost-effective and good quality service shall become available to Indian public through competition between the service providers.

(c) Does not arise in view of (b) above.

#### **Allotment of STD/PCO Booths**

392. SHRI SIBU SOREN : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state the details of

priorities/reservations offered to the SC/ST applicants for the allotment of STD/PCO booths ?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI BENI PRASAD VARMA) : Sir, SC/ST applicants are among the preferential Category of applicants to be considered for allotment of STD PCOs by STD/PCO Allotment Committees alongwith other preferential categories of applicants. However, there is no reservation on for any category of applicants.

#### **Barge Power Generating Unit in Kerala**

393. SHRI P.C. THOMAS : Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government of Kerala has requested for sanction of Barge Power Generating Units in Kerala;

(b) if so, the reaction of the Union Government thereto;

(c) whether the Government of Kerala has also requested for more quota of fuel for such purposes; and

(d) whether such projects are proposed to be taken up by Cochin Ship Yard or other Government undertakings ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY AND MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF POWER (SHRI YOGINDER K. ALAGH) : (a) to (c) The Government of Kerala have requested for allocation of liquid fuel for barge mounted power plants in the State. This request is under consideration.

(d) The agencies to execute these projects (in case the request of Government of Kerala is accepted) will have to be decided by the State Government.

[Translation]

#### **Production Cost of Steel**

394. SHRI NAWAL KISHORE RAI :

PROF. PREM SINGH CHANDUMAJRA :

Will the Minister of STEEL be pleased to state :

(a) whether the production cost of various types of steel in India is more than in comparison to other countries;

(b) if so, the average production cost of steel in the

country and the extent to which it is more than the average production cost of the world;

(c) whether the Steel Authority of India Limited is contemplating to take steps to bring down this production cost;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the extent to which the production cost is likely to be decreased ?

THE MINISTER OF STEEL AND MINISTER OF MINES (SHRI BIRENDRA PRASAD BAISHYA) : (a) and (b) The cost of production of steel primarily depends upon prices of inputs such as iron ore, coal, steel scrap and energy, costs of freight and labour and financial charges. As per BICP Tour report on cost study of steel industry, the average cost pattern for production of saleable steel in different countries, based on 1994 data, are as below :

Countries	Cost (US \$ per tonne)
USA	503
UK	423
France	504
Germany	530
India (SAIL)	410

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) and (e) Steps taken by SAIL to reduce production costs and to improve performance are :

- Modernisation and technological upgradation of its plants.
- Improved quality, product-mix and production in line with market requirements.
- Improving techno-economic factors viz., reduction in coke rate, energy consumption, metallic input, improvement in yield etc.
- Improving availability of equipment through effective maintenance.
- Strict control and reduction in cost of production.

SAIL has planned to reduce the controllable production cost of saleable steel by about 7-8% during 1997-98.

[English]

#### Cellular Service by Reliance Telecom

395. SHRIMATI LAKSHMI PANABAKA : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government propose to build a global system for mobile communication network to serve its seven circles;

(b) whether the Reliance Telecom has become one of the largest cellular services in India;

(c) if so, the name of the States where it is likely to be provided; and

(d) to what extent the Reliance Telecom have established services in the country ?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI BENI PRASAD VARMA) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) The company holds licences for Cellular Mobile Telephone Service for seven Telecom. Circles which is the maximum number of licences held by a single company. A total of 33 licences for Telecom Circles and 8 licences for 4 metro cities have been awarded for Cellular Mobile Telephone Service. The Telecom Circles awarded to the company are (i) Assam (ii) Bihar (iii) Himachal Pradesh (iv) Madhya Pradesh (v) North East (vi) Orissa & (vii) West Bengal.

(d) The commercial Cellular Mobile Telephone Services by the company have not yet been started in any of the Circles.

#### National Power Grid

396. SHRI K.H. MUNIYAPPA :  
SHRI SANTOSH MOHAN DEV :

Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state :

(a) whether a proposal to set up a National power grid in the country to help in meeting power the power shortage in various States is under consideration of the Union Government;

(b) if so, whether the State Governments have been consulted in forming the National Power Grid;

(c) if so, their opinion and the time by which a final decision is likely to be taken;